

to a system in which the land is socialised by the local communes. The peasant, they say, must not be the wage-slave even of the State, as the Social Democrats want, nor a proprietor, as the Cadets want, but a member of a social unit with a right to work an area of land and to reap the products of his labour upon it. To the social unit should belong the land, but to the peasant the products of the land. In order to meet the modern necessity for working industries on a large scale the Socialist Revolutionaries would make use of the agricultural co-operative movement.

No More Private Property in Land

But if the Socialist Revolutionaries who inspire the S.P.D. in the villages and the Social Democrats who inspire the C.W.S.D. in the towns differ on land distribution and the future of the agricultural industry, they are nevertheless united in their determination once and for all to abolish landlordism and the rights of private property. "The land comes from God, and can belong to no one," is an old Russian saying, and it correctly expresses the spirit of the peasant. The revolutionary democracy therefore in town and country presents a solid front to the Cadets, who talk about the sacredness of property and try to represent the Russian peasant as developing into a type like the British farmer or the French small proprietor. With this great mass of revolutionary opinion solid against private ownership it is certain that whatever else may happen the Russian landlord will become a thing of the past.

Compensation, the Land Banks, and Mortgages

The question, however, remains whether the landlords ought to be compensated for their land. The Socialist Revolutionaries say that they should not be. They point to the fact that the Russian landlords are not, as in Western Europe, also capitalists who are continually applying capital to the land, and whose rent consists of interest on their own improvements as well as exploitation profits from the needs of the people. In the case of the Russian landlord his rent consists solely of the latter, for he has never, except in the case of the sugar companies, improved or developed it. But simple expropriation without compensation may lead to a disastrous financial crisis, because many landlords have mortgaged their lands to banks. The Land Bank, specially formed by the Tsar's Government to bolster up the landlords, has in many cases advanced money on land for much more than the latter was worth. Therefore the ruin of several banks is probable unless some compensation is afforded. It is interesting to note that at the last conference of the Socialist Revolutionary party at Samara a resolution was passed that the banks should be compensated for their losses by an extra super-tax upon large incomes. This view also received support in the All-Russia Conference of the Social Democrats recently held in Petrograd.

"THE LAND OR REVOLUTION"

An Emphatic and Convincing Exposure
of Land Monopoly and Explanation of
the means by which it shall be Abolished.

By R. L. OUTHWAITE, M.P.

Price 1s., by Post 1s. 1½d.

BOOK REVIEW

THE LAND OR REVOLUTION

Mr. Outhwaite has written a book which well reveals the spirit of the time. His subject is the land question or the social problem—call it what you will, for it is one—and his background is the war and the vision of the nations tottering into bankruptcy, civil strife, and ruin. "The old order is doomed, its disruption is rightly seen to be inevitable, the tax-gatherer will be its executioner, an empty treasury provide its grave.

. . . War, Famine, High Taxation, Revolution, such is the historical progression. War we have, famine confronts the world, the end of borrowing is at hand, and taxation without precedent must follow. Only revolution is in doubt. It comes towards our gates with the overthrow of Czardom. In the East the conclusion has been reached, the full course has been run. Will the constitutional systems of the West be sundered by the forces generated by war?"

It is a question fraught with deep interest not only to landlords, financiers and bondholders, but also for the great masses who are now by their blood and labour carrying on the war and whom the powers that be wish to pay for it out of their hard-earned scanty wages in the years to come. For here is the secret of revolution, the conflict between the working mass and the parasitic few, brought to a sudden and desperate issue by famine and the attempt of the privileged to continue extorting rent and dividends out of the famine-stricken.

But let us look a little deeper, Revolution has a deeper root than this. It is due to the obstinacy of the ruling minority, the Bourbonism that will yield none of its privileges, although it be those privileges that have reduced the masses to starvation; and in part it is due to ignorance on the part of the despoiled as to how by peaceful economic means they might satisfy their needs. Let us hope that Mr. Outhwaite's book will enlighten both classes, and so fulfil its author's purpose of forestalling the revolution of gun and bayonet by a peaceable change which will revolutionise the economic position of the toilers.

We must pass, however, from this thought to pay a tribute to the brilliancy and vigour with which Mr. Outhwaite has developed the argument for the taxation of land values. The main objections are clearly dealt with, and the chapters on Socialism and Capital should be particularly useful. Those who, like Mr. J. M. Robertson, think that the large farm is the best means of production and that it is better to be a farm servant than a small-holder will read with especial interest the chapter in which Danish agriculture is dealt with; and others who are interested in "baby weeks" and similar mild excitement would do well to read in the chapter on "clearing the slums" what are the real difficulties which sweep away in thousands those little lives about which we all profess to be anxious. The chapter on "The Status of Woman," declared by one reviewer to be irrelevant, will appeal to all who have the insight to see what are the possibilities of a society freed from the tyranny of want and greed. We almost

wish that Mr. Outhwaite had added a chapter on "Status for man," but the whole book is that: it is animated by the desire to destroy all the bonds which trammel the free growth and development of the human spirit. We hope to deal with some arresting points later.

One word of praise must be added in respect of the attention which has been paid to the form and printing which has resulted in the production of a volume most pleasing to the eye.

PROFITEERING IN LAND

Tenants' Notice to Quit

Are the Government going to stand idly by and let the owners of agricultural land take huge profits owing to war conditions? asks "A Tenant Farmer" in a letter giving particulars of farms for sale.

"Farmers are urged to do their best to produce more food," he writes, "and are doing it with a good heart under the most trying conditions. But the one thing essential to their doing so must be security of tenure. Yet many landlords have given notice to their tenants that their farms are to be sold, simply because they know that if they are put on the market now they will sell for nearly double what they would have made before the war.

"It is true the farmer has a chance to purchase his farm and his own improvements, but at such prices that are out of his reach; and the little capital that he has to work with will be locked up. Often he will have to sell his stock before he could even pay the deposit on the purchase of his land. I give the following particulars of farms for sale, the rents, and the price asked of the tenant if he wishes to acquire the land:—

Brook Farm, 69 acres (54 ploughing); rent £80. Price asked £2,000.

Rectory Farm, 175 acres (70 ploughing); rent £110. Price £3,500.

Glebe Farm, 59 acres (50 ploughing); rent £60. Price £1,500.

Accommodation land, 21 acres; rent £33. Price £800.

Accommodation land, 27 acres; rent £44. Price £1,000.

Rectory Farm, 287 acres; rent £300. Price asked £6,000.

Another farm in same parish, 132 acres; rent £110. Price asked £2,650.

A small holding same parish, 16 acres; rent £21. Price £400.

"I know the land well, and the rents paid were all they were worth before the war—in fact, a precarious living was obtained from them. It is not fair to ask them to plough up more land and put more energy and capital into it if they are not secure in their tenancy."—*"Daily Chronicle"* (London), December 27th.

NEW PAMPHLET.

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HERE AND THERE

As usual we wish our readers everywhere the compliments of the season, and may the New Year carry with it the great Peace that mankind, weary of war, seeks to achieve.

LAND VALUES begin this month a new volume. Hitherto the volume has ended in May. The alteration means that the volume now in course of binding will be for eighteen months, June, 1916, to December, 1917. In future LAND VALUES volume will begin in January and end in December. But what we want is new and additional readers, and we look to our people to continue their good efforts to extend our subscribers' list.

Lord Guthrie made reference to the lightness of the calendar, and said that it was very satisfactory to note the small amount of crime that had been before the Court, Dec. 27th. Some people said that the criminals were all at the front. He thought there was a better reason than that—namely, that through the amount of employment available and good wages men were now doing honest work who formerly, through poverty and irregular employment, would have fallen into crime. It was another instance that at the root of the whole criminal question was not what our forefathers called original sin, but poverty and absence of regular employment.—*Lord Guthrie at the High Court of Justiciary sitting at Glasgow, "Glasgow Herald," December 28th.*

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Romanoff's windows in their flat at Tobolsk, Siberia, give a view of the sheds in which, during his reign (as Czar of all the Russias), about 200,000 men and women were lodged like animals on their way to the mines in Siberia—"Cast thy bread upon the waters."—*Milngavie (Stirlingshire), "Herald," December 21st.*

An extensive cattle drive took place on Monday night at Moorehall, County Mayo, on a large grazing ranch belonging to Mr. George Moore, the novelist, and held under the eleven months' system by Mr. Mark Mellet, Claremorris. The stock were collected along the public roads by the police. On the same occasion Mrs. Wilson's large grazing farm, two miles from Mr. Moore's, was also cleared. The Ballinrobe Council yesterday issued an appeal to grazers to surrender lands in the interest of the public peace and for the benefit of the adjoining tenantry, who were clamouring for them both for grazing and food production purposes.—*"Morning Post," 28th November.*

The Executive Committee of the National Farmers' Union, at a meeting at the Savoy Hotel yesterday adopted the principle of a resolution which declared that the provisions of the Corn Production Act did not give the tenant farmer such security as to encourage him to increase the production so badly needed by the nation.—*The "Times," 13th December.*

It is not a case even of "roses, roses, all the way," for the poor allotment-holders. Thousands of these have come into possession of war plots only to discover that there are powerful unseen enemies in the shape of greedy rate-collectors, who demand rates in the proportion of one-half part instead of one-fourth part only of the net annual or rateable value. And most of them, alas! never dreamt of rates.—*"Common Sense," December 29th.*

At a meeting of the National Farmers' Union at Worcester yesterday, Mr. J. Woodyatt presiding, Mr. P. Phillips, a dairy farmer, said he had a letter from a Worcestershire landlord giving notice to his tenants of his intention to raise their rents, and the argument he used was extraordinary—that the higher rent a man paid the better he farmed! The farmer's reply in such a case would be that he would not farm so well.

Mr. J. Phillips said he knew a landlord who farmed his land ten times worse than his tenants. Why should not the bad landlord be turned out as well as the good farmer?